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ABSTRACT

The English Department at the Allegheny Campus of the Community College of Allegheny County, in Pennsylvania, has implemented standards for recruiting, training, and providing development opportunities for part-time faculty. To ensure high quality instruction and a continuity of standards between full- and part-time faculty, the same criteria for hiring and the same evaluation process are used for both groups of faculty. The hiring process is conducted by a Part-Time Faculty Coordinator and a Part-Time Faculty Committee, composed of volunteer full-time faculty who review applications, conduct interviews, and submit selections to the department head. In an effort to monitor standards and to ensure the fairness of evaluation, part-time faculty are required to submit a portfolio during their first semester of actual hire. In addition, all part-time faculty are ranked by the Committee as either highly competitive, competitive, or non-competitive to reward instructors whose performance has been exemplary and enable department heads to make fair and informed staffing decisions. Part-time faculty are also invited to participate in almost all academic and social functions of the department, including meetings, committees, and professional development activities. Includes guidelines for screening faculty portfolios, a part-time staffing record form, a list portfolio requirements, and a syllabus evaluation form. (TGI)

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A PARADIGM SHIFT: RECRUITING, TRAINING, AND DEVELOPING QUALITY PART-TIME FACULTY

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Dr. Todd came to the Community College of Allegheny County as a part-time faculty member in 1982. She taught numerous courses at various sites, on and off-campus, and then was hired full-time in 1984. Elected Department Chair in 1990, Dr. Todd served four years (two terms). She presently chairs a system-wide committee to address student retention.

A PARADIGM SHIFT: RECRUITING, TRAINING, AND DEVELOPING QUALITY PART-TIME FACULTY

Introduction:

Anyone who is part-time faculty or anyone who works closely with part-time faculty can quickly identify the difficulties and frustrations such a job position brings. No in-depth study is necessary to identify the problems; they are immediately observable. Inadequate pay, no health benefits, no job security, little respect, no support services, no private work space, and alienation from the very department or college for which they work are only a few. Given the increasing demand for part-time faculty and the indisputable devotion most part-time faculty have to teaching, it is ironic that as the demand for part-time faculty increases so do the problems that beset them.

This presentation offers ways of recruiting, training, and developing part-time faculty that have been implemented successfully by the English Department at Allegheny Campus of the Community College of Allegheny County, a large, multi-campus, urban institution in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Background Information:

We were relatively unaware that our handling of part-time faculty was unique until we were included in John and Suanne Roueche's latest book, Strangers in Their Own Land: Part-Time Faculty in American Community Colleges. This book and its authors will be in an upcoming PBS special, as part of its 1996-1997 Author! Author! series. In a video segment, along with five or six other colleges, we describe the important ways the English Department ensures high quality instruction from part-time faculty and integrates and develops them into our academic community.

Rationale:

At the time that these standards were first implemented, the English Department at the Allegheny Campus was dealing with an enrollment increase. Although as an academic department we had the largest full-time faculty in the college system, we became heavily dependent on part-time instructors to teach the majority of the developmental courses and the majority of courses taught at off-campus sites.

We recognized that one way to ensure high quality instruction and to ensure a continuity of standards between full-time and part-time faculty was to use the same criteria for hiring part-time faculty as for full-time and to use the same evaluation process, with only some minor modifications. We also recognized that this would facilitate the hiring of full-time instructors, should the enrollment trend continue and college budget allow, because those teaching for us part-time already would be desirable candidates for hire.

The Hiring Process:

A member of the full-time English Department faculty volunteers to be the Coordinator of the part-time faculty for usually two years. Included in the seven major responsibilities of this position is reviewing any information from applicants to see if the minimum criteria for hire is met. Once those candidates are determined, their resumes are distributed among the Part-Time Faculty Committee, comprised of full-time faculty volunteers from the English Department. The committee, in turn, votes on who should be interviewed, and interview arrangements are made by the Coordinator. An interview is conducted with at least two committee members and the applicant. Interview questions are the same as those asked during the interview for a full-time instructor, with some modification. Interviewees are also asked to grade a student paper. The committee then reviews the recommendations of the individual committee sub-groups and votes on who should be admitted to the part-time pool of eligible instructors. Those designated are sent a letter of "acceptance" and informed that if their services are needed, they will be contacted within a week prior to the beginning of a new semester when schedules for everyone are finalized. The pool of names is given to the English Department Head who determines assignment based on course and schedule availability and then forwards hiring recommendations to the Divisional Dean of Instruction.

The Portfolio Evaluation Process:

In an effort to monitor standards and to ensure fairness of evaluation among the English Department faculty, the part-time faculty are required to submit a portfolio during their first semester of actual hire. The content requirements are very similar to those for full-time faculty whose contract also requires them to submit a portfolio for evaluation. Included are the syllabi for each course the instructor is teaching, at least three writing assignments, the rationale for one writing assignment, and a statement of the individual's teaching philosophy. The portfolio is read and evaluated by at least two members of the Part-Time Faculty Committee. If the portfolio is found to be EXCELLENT or SATISFACTORY, that is recorded in the instructor's file. If the portfolio is found to be UNSATISFACTORY, the instructor receives a letter detailing suggested improvements or revisions. The significant criteria for evaluation of portfolios include, among other things, completeness and conformity with department policy, with department syllabi, and with College regulations. Also evaluated is consistency with departmental standards at the instructional level of both the writing assignment rationales and the explanation of grades for sample student papers. Each semester, all part-time instructors are invited to make additions or improvements to the portfolio on file and are asked to update that record of professional enrichment and activities.

The Ranking Procedure:

The Part-time Faculty Committee established a system whereby all members of the part-time pool are ranked according to certain criteria. The purpose of this is to ensure that sections staffed by part-time personnel receive the highest quality of instruction available. One of the most difficult tasks of the Department Head is to decide fairly and equitably which part-time pool members should receive teaching assignments, and which should receive more than one assignment. To remove the burden from the Department Head of having to make choices which may be perceived by some as unfair, the Part-Time Faculty Committee established a ranking of members within the part-time pool.

Each current member of the part-time pool is placed in one of three categories: HIGHLY COMPETITIVE, COMPETITIVE, AND NON-COMPETITIVE. All newly hired members of the pool are assigned to a fourth category, "new members/not ranked," and are not moved into any of the above three categories until they have taught at least one course on our campus and submitted a portfolio for evaluation. The Committee reviews the pool rankings each semester before assignments are made for the following semester. Faculty ranking may be changed by vote of the Committee if an instructor's performance changes as measured against the criteria. When placing part-time faculty in the pool divisions, the Committee considers:

a. Quality of course outline and portfolio
b. Adherence to College regulations and contract provisions
c. Adherence to Developmental Review policies and practices
d. Recommendation of Department Head after review of personnel files
e. Recommendation of Developmental Review Coordinator.

Elements which do NOT affect the placement of persons within the pool include student complaints regarding part-time instructors when no formal complaint has been filed with the Department Head; participation in Department and College activities (since not all part-time instructors have equal opportunity to participate); inability to accept a specific teaching assignment; and inability to accept any teaching assignment in a given semester.

The Committee believes that ranking of instructors in the part-time pool rewards instructors whose performance has been exemplary and enables the Department Head to make staffing decisions more fairly, based on a collection of performance records.

Integration into Departmental Activities:

Part-Time faculty are invited to participate in almost all academic and social functions of the English Department. They are welcomed at monthly departmental meetings, they are an integral part of departmental committees selecting departmental texts, editing departmental syllabi, and formulating and editing

departmental policies. In addition, part-time faculty are given a departmental handbooks, written by the English Department, which not only explains various services available to both faculty and students but also states departmental and college-wide policies; its appendix is comprised of example syllabi, academic forms, and departmental handouts. Departmental memos are also sent to part-time faculty, so that they are kept up-to-date on departmental business.

Additionally, every semester, there is a morning-long professional development meeting which brings together part-time and full-time faculty teaching developmental courses to talk about and share concerns and ideas.

Reaction and Feedback:

There is a general atmosphere of respect and collegiality among part-time and full-time faculty, and the English Department is committed to giving opportunities for an exchange of ideas and reactions among colleagues. The administrators working closely with the process have also commended it and have supported its implementation. Because there is an evaluation of all faculty by the students each semester, there is also an opportunity for students to offer their responses. This process has been in place for several years and is working successfully.

GUIDELINES FOR SCREENING FOLDERS

Degrees:

M.A. in English, English Education, Linguistics, Rhetoric and Composition

Degrees in Creative Writing and Journalism are not excluded if the person has teaching experience in composition, particularly basic writing

If person has only a Bachelors in English and a masters or a professional degree in something else, look at teaching experience. If they had no teaching experience, exclusion is recommended.

Teaching Experience:

Priority given to those who have teaching experience at the college level in basic writing and Composition I.

High school teaching acceptable if there is evidence of writing instruction

Work in writing labs and tutoring centers

Transcripts:

Examined for courses in teaching writing, English language, linguistics, rhetoric, and reading instruction

Publications:

Examined for any publications on the teaching of writing or research in composition. Most will publish on literature. Very few do any work on composition.

References:

If no references are listed and no letters have been submitted and the person is a viable addition to the pool, ask for references and check at least two of them just to know that the person is who he/she claims to be.

Categorize resumes into those who can be used in developmental only, those who can teach the full range of writing courses, those that can handle I and II and lit., and lit. only. Give priority to the first two categories. The lit only people are of little use, given that there are rarely any lits available to part-time instructors.

PART-TIME STAFFING INDIVIDUAL RECORD

DATE OPENED _____

CANDIDATE _____

ADDRESS _____

_____

PHONE _____

INITIAL SCREENING: Approve # _____ Reject # _____ **COMMITTEE REVIEW:** Approve # _____ Reject # _____	
COMMENTS:	
LETTER SENT: Invite for Interview _____ Reject _____ **Phone Contact:** _____	

INTERVIEW SCHEDULED:	Date _____	Time _____	NO SHOW
INTERVIEWERS:	1. _____	4. _____	
	2. _____	5. _____	
	3. _____	6. _____	
INTERVIEW RESULTS:	Recommend	Do Not Recommend	
>>> Attach comments/Record of interview to this sheet			
WHOLE COMMITTEE REVIEW OF INTERVIEW RESULTS:	Recommend	Do Not Recommend	
>>>Attach minutes of committee discussion to this sheet			

Letter to Candidate: Invitation _____ Rejection _____

Candidate's Response: Accept _____ Reject _____

PART-TIME FACULTY PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

* Syllabi for each course the instructor is teaching
* Minimum of three writing assignments
* The rationale for one writing assignment
* A statement of the individual's teaching philosophy

SIGNIFICANT CRITERIA FOR PORTFOLIO EVALUATION

* Completeness and conformity with department policy, with department syllabi, and with College regulations
* Consistency with departmental standards at the instructional level of both the writing assignment rationales and the explanation of grades for sample student papers

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PART-TIME FACULTY POOL DIVISIONS

* Quality of course outline and portfolio
* Adherence to College regulations and contract provisions
* Adherence to Developmental Review policies and practices
* Recommendation of Department Head after review of personnel files
* Recommendation of Developmental Review Coordinator

ELEMENTS NOT AFFECTING PLACEMENT

* Student complaints when no formal complaint has been filed with the Department Head
* Participation in Department and College activities
* Inability to accept a sepcific teaching assignment
* Inability to accept any teaching assignment in a given semester

INSTRUCTOR _____ SEMESTER _____ 19____

COURSE/SEC. _____

EVALUATION OF PART-TIME FACULTY SYLLABUS

Included	Omitted	Partial	REQUIRED ELEMENTS
___	___	___	1. Office hours/location
___	___	___	Phone number
___	___	___	Mailbox location
___	___	___	2. Course prerequisites
___	___	___	3. Course objectives, consistent with Dept. Syllabus
___	___	___	4. Course objectives, consistent with Dept. Syllabus
___	___	___	5. Requirements for successfully completing the course itself
___	___	___	6. Class format/activities & behaviors expected from students
___	___	___	7. Attendance policy, including late arrival/early departure
___	___	___	8. Required texts
___	___	___	9. [089/100 only] Basic information regarding Dpt. Review
___	___	___	10. Grading policy
			11. <u>Written assignments</u>
___	___	___	Number & types of assignments
___	___	___	Due date & late submission policy
___	___	___	Format specifications for writing assignments
___	___	___	Revision policy
___	___	___	Make students responsible for delivering [and copying] papers

COMMENTS